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ABSTRACT

The role of student societies in higher education in the nineteenth century is reviewed. Among writings on the topic, a myth has been preserved that the student groups played a significant part in augmenting a fixed curriculum, were open forums for the discussion of controversial issues, and provided wider library holdings. Two Ohio colleges, Western Reserve College and Oberlin, are reviewed to illustrate the idea that the student societies did not fill the role of a center for social activism or improvement of the curriculum or library. It is concluded that the student groups were formed with literary and moral self-improvement as their stated and real goal. Social intercourse with fellow students was a by-product of these groups. The groups are judged a success, based on their fairly long history and their support from faculty. They were not a means to achieve social reform, nor were they anything but an integral part of the nineteenth century college and the nineteenth century establishment. (SW)

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STUDENT SOCIETIES: NINETEENTH CENTURY ESTABLISHMENT

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STUDENT SOCIETIES: NINETEENTH CENTURY ESTABLISHMENT

Current study of the history of higher education in the nineteenth century has not served to change the perception of the role of the student societies promoted by historians such as Frederick Rudolph and George Schmidt. Rather, a myth has continued to be preserved that the student groups played a significant part in augmenting a fixed curriculum, were open forums for the discussion of controversial issues, and provided wider library holdings. The examination of these faulty generalizations becomes more important in the 1970's as a new generation of historians examines the existing reports of the ante-bellum colleges with the intent of modifying these ideas on the nineteenth century college and attempting to fill the void in our knowledge of the students.[1]

Student societies flourished in American colleges in the first half of the nineteenth century. Historians of higher education have viewed this development as a student attempt to bring about reform in higher education.[2] This idea follows logically from the fact that these societies grew in a period of numerous reform movements dedicated to deliberate attempts to remake American society. The nineteenth century was a time of great change that saw the expansion of frontiers and with it the extension of democracy and such supporting institutions as the western colleges. This period witnessed reform movements in almost all phases of American life which had an effect upon the developing western colleges and upon the student societies that were encouraged to exist within their structure. The role of these societies has not been studied

in depth; but historians of higher education such as Frederick Rudolph, John Brubacher, George Schmidt, and Richard Hofstadter, tend to place twentieth century value systems upon ninteenth century people and view these student societies as instruments of change in a reform era. The colleges of nineteenth cenutry America, however, were conservative institutions given the role of preserving the values of society for oncoming generations, and hence, the colleges and often their students came reluctantly to the various reform causes. Perhaps the faulty assumption might come from the belief that newer colleges developed without a traditional pattern and that this lack allowed for the development of a non-traditional student who would rebel.[3] It would appear, however, that the error made by the historians cited above comes from removing these colleges and their students from their time and their local environments where they were, in historian David Potts' view, the "chief ornament of a town and a vital element in local cultural and economic life."[4]

With this idea of "town and gown," one can take a new look at the student societies. They were formed with literary and moral self-improvement as their goal and as such were an integral part of that well-established instituiton, the nineteenth century college. As a means of granting students control of a small segment of their college lives, the student societies were, if not a total failure, certainly not a total success. A twentieth century researcher , looking for reform activities, finds encourgement in the students' praise of their experience in the literary societies and comes to believe that these groups provided a forum for students awakening social conscience. "I got fully as much out of the literary society as I did from anything else in college,"

was a typical student comment.[5] Contemporary historians also tend to enhance the myth when they forget the rules of debate. There are always two teams that defend each side of the issue and that the winner is the team that best defends their position. Statements that "the debating and social clubs which in the South defended slavery and in the North espoused free soil . . . ." have little meaning when the results of the debates are checked.[6] It is, however, the outlook of the 1960's and 1970's that causes the researcher to look for activist student movements in long-past periods of American history.

The idea, a romantic one at best, that the student societies provided a forum for controversial topics and a place where students could discuss and read about topics that were not a part of the nineteenth century college curriculum remains in the literature. A new concept of the nature of the ante-bellum college curriculum has been presented by Douglas Sloan and has suggested that there is argument for a total revision in the views held about the nineteenth century college. Sloan's ideas provide the basis for the belief that there was not a fixed classical curriculum that was irrelevant to the student and resistant to change. The picture most historians have created of a curriculum consisting of the classical Greek and Latin authors was not, says Sloan, a uniform one; and the study of natural science was valued even by the evangelical Charles C. Finney, president of Oberlin.[7] This revised view of the history of the college curriculum makes one question the ideas expressed by most writers about the function of student societies and the need for extra-curricular activities to augment a fixed curriculum.

That myths dies slowly can be illustrated by the latest edition of the Brubacher and Rudy history of higher education. The text states that

the societies were essentially debating clubs and then continues to describe the groups as "more than a mere extracurriuclar phenomenon." The societies posed a threat to "the narrow and traditional classical program of the old-time college at the same time challenging and maintaining the myth."[8] The student society myth will continue to be reinforced as long as there is no new research, such as Sloan's, on the contribution of these groups to collegiate life. New texts using the ideas of older works will continue to describe the literary societies as a student attempt to modify a fixed curriculum.[9]

Two important Ohio colleges illustrate the idea that the student societies did not fill the role of a center for social activism, improvement of the curriculum, nor provide a comprehensive library. The societies merely were an integral part of college life providng one more element of the "collegiate way." These two colleges developed simultaneously in the Western Reserve: Western Reserve College founded in Hudson in 1826 and Oberlin, a part of Oberlin Colony, founded in 1834. Both colleges were started by the Congregationalists with added support to Western Reserve from the Presbyterians under the Plan of Union.[10] While it is apparent that both colleges were formed on a deeply religious foundation, this influence, too, is now being questioned; but here the similarities end. The two institutions were often rivals in many ways. Western Reserve seemed to exclude the reformer, Oberlin, to invite him in. Western Reserve exemplified the classical education of the Yale Report of 1828, while Oberlin followed Charles Grandison Finney's revivalist spirit. A contemporary observer of both commencements in 1848 commented:

> At Hudson the reasoning powers were cultivated more than the imagination and sensibilities. At Oberlin the order

> was reversed . . . at Hudson the speakers seemed to have learned elocution more from percept than from example; at Oberlin more from example than from percept.[11]

That these differences did not impede the parallel development of student societies adds further support to the hypothesis that these groups merely succeeded in providing a protected arena for the discussion of political, philosophical, religious, and historical topics.

A student of higher education can easily imagine Joseph Welch Barr traveling across the wilderness to Hudson, Ohio in 1828. One can further imagine Mr. Barr conducting the first meeting of the Philozetian Society of Western Reserve College. Barr transferred from Hamilton College in his junior year and graduated from Western Reserve with the first class of 1830. He exemplified the westward movement of societies as he was known to have belonged to a similar society at Hamilton. It is also not surprising that on April 7, 1830, Barr met again with a second group of students who found "that it is expedient to form a literary society." The pattern of societies established at older colleges found them developing in pairs, an indication of their roles as debating societies. Barr and James Laughhead were appointed a committee to confer with the faculty to obtain permission to form the Adelphic Society.[12] One cannot quite as easilty envision the beginning of the Ladies Literary Society of Oberlin. Thd difficulty lies in conceiving, at that time, of a society of college women who would meet in the manner of men to practice the skills of writing, communicating, and thinking.[13]

The practice of literary skills was the primary purpose of most of the student societies. This role was agreed upon by the students, the faculty, and the administration of the college. Such activity fit well into the funciton of the nineteenth century college since literary

self-improvement was considered a direct means of moral self-improvement, and moral self-improvement was indeed the primary goal of the college and of life.

Evidence for agreement on purpose comes from the following sources: the constitutions of the societies and their revisions, the society charters, the faculty minutes, the trustees minutes, the student society minutes, and available personal accounts, all documents written in the lofty language of the nineteenth century. Interpreted literally, these documents might be viewed as instruments professing reform. For this reason, intent must be compared to action to determine if indeed the societies were used as agents of change. There is no evidence that the students used the majority of these student societies as instruments of direct social action. The students were very interested in literary self-improvement, and this was the only activity of most of the societies from the time that they were found[ed] until the time that they faded away.

Thomas Harding in his study of the college literary society found that these organizations existed at all of the colleges in the East, the West, and the South and engaged in the same activities.[14] While the scope of these societies often appears to be large, one must remember the limitations imposed by the pervasive religious atmosphere: "Let every literary acquirement be seasoned with piety."[15] In other words, the nineteenth century milieu of religion, economics, and politics found its way into the student society with the result that students regularly used nineteenth century reform rhetoric in the titles of their debates.

Evidence of the use made of the constitutions and their regular revisions exists in the minutes and reports of the societies. A study of the constitutions of all the societies reveals that a standing constitutional committee was often specified and that societies often compared and approved each other's constitutions.[16] However, further study reveals that the changes made by these committees and approved by the entire membership were minor ones and did not change the basic purpose of the societies, which was "cultivation of the moral and itellectual powers"[17] by the use of "debates, composition, criticism and oration."[18] Therefore, later "revised" constitutions closely resembled those approved at early meetings, contradicting the notion that the societies were concerned with perfecting miniature republics.

Since the societies did not waiver in their purposes over a period of thirty years, at least as stated constitutionally, it becomes important to look carefully at these stated purposes. The Phi Delta Society of Western Reserve College very clearly articulated its intent in the preamble to its constitution:

> In unity there is strength; in investigation there is improvement, and in advancement there is happiness. In consideration of the first we associate ourselves together; in view of the second we establish a regular system of action; and in anticipation of the third we adopt Phi Delta as our motto, Virtue as our prerogative and the following Constitution as our guide.[19]

It will be noted that the action statement in this philosophy is directed toward intellectual investigation. The intent of the students is clear. In nineteenth century language, the students viewed these various societies as a means of self-improvement in the areas of literature, friendship, and morality that some might view as a social action if it were not the stated goal of all nineteenth century people. Further

evidence of intent comes from the charters given to the societies by the state. The Adelphic Society of Western Reserve contains along with other stipulations the directive that the funds of the group be applied only to literary purposes.[20]

Even those groups not considered to be literary can be included in this statement as their object, too, was improved morality. The members of the Handel Society of Western Reserve found that they were "under a moral obligation to serve God with the heart, and voice, and to sing unto Him with the spirit, and understanding also . . . ."[21] Phi Beta Kappa, organized at Western Reserve but not Oberlin, established literary exercises such as essays and Greek and Latin translations as part of their regular meetings.[22] The theological society of Oberlin College called itself the Theological Literary Society and stated its purpose as one of rhetorical improvement.[23] Nowhere in these society constitutions can there be found a call to action, which this researcher believes is inherent in a stipulated definition of social reform. Nowhere in these constitutions can there be found an attempt to organize the student body as agents of social change. In all of them there is stated the goal of self-improvement that is an integral part of the nineteenth century person.

Was the intent of student societies the same in colleges other than Oberlin and Western Reserve and had the purpose always been the same? One turns to the writings of Cotton Mather, who belonged to the first society at Harvard College in 1706, and notes these same narrowly drawn purposes. He found that the students "resolved upon essays to speak to one another and in sweetest methods of brotherly love, watch over one another or carry on some suitable exercises of devotion

together . . . ."[24] David Potter, in a monograph on debating in the colonial colleges, noted that Columbia College eliminated forensic debate from its course work because two societies had formed at the college that filled these needs.[25] THese practices of the colonial college societies continued into later times and were brought to the West by people like Joseph Barr. In the nineteenth century South, the societies are best remembered for the training that they gave in speech, and for this they were actively aided by the university officials.[26] Miami College in Ohio had societies formed "to promote morality, fellowship, and good feeling amongst us."[27] The historians of higher education did not err when they noted that the societies aided in creating an esprit de corps between the college and its student body.

Constitutional revisions during the period of this study reflect no fundamental changes of purpose or, indeed, from the colonial societies. New rules were made for dividing the group for the purpose of discussion, and offices were often added to reinforce the basic intent of the society. One example of this was the addition of the Censor in a second constitution of the Phi Delta Society of Western Reserve. This officer would speak after the literary exercises on the general character of the discussion and the orations. Many of the new rules dealt with behavior at the meetings. They concerned such things as the proper order of speaking or the times when whispering was allowed or the proper times for leaving one's seat.[28] These modifications were not aimed at change in purpose but rather at insuring orderly literary debate.

Student letters as well as the constitutions often indicated what could be gained from membership in the various student societies. Frederick C. Wright, a graduate of Oberlin, commented on the absence of secrecy in

the societies and seemed to agree with other student views of the literary societies when he told of their existence as open societies where debate and parliamentary procedure was practiced.[29] S. G. Whittlesey, a Reserve student, commented upon the impulse among the men to discuss and lecture on their favorite topic.[30] A mania, as Whittlesey called it, could well be satisfied in the duly constituted student societies. A. S. Kedzie of Western Reserve recalled that the Philozetian and Adelphic Societies met "weekly for debate and literary exercises."[31] Returning to Oberlin, we find that a woman has left a very succinct description of her society:

> We have connected with our Seminary, a Literary and Religious association, in which capacity we met frequently and each one in turn, according to appointments, writes and communicates to us her thoughts on some important and interesting subject.[32]

No inconsistency exists among these students' views of the student societies and the picture revealed by careful study of their constitutions, but it is essential to look at another supposed contribution, the society libraries.

"We have not yet learned that the library is not only the first convenience of a University, but that it is the very first necessity,--that it is the life and spirit . . . ."[33] George Ticknor knew that the college curriculum did not require library research and that this fact was inappropriate for a university or for that matter, a college. The very existence of libraries during the first half of the nineteenth century becomes an important question for study. The library was not important to higher education in the period studied, and yet colleges had libraries. Not only did every college have a library, but almost every student society also had a library. Past studies of these libraries have resulted only in the development of categories of holdings and counts of acquisitions.

Student society libraries individually often had more holdings than the college library and when the libraries of several student groups were combined, they almost always were larger then those of the college library.[34] Further study reveals that the student societies collected books even though they often duplicated the holdings of the college library, were made avalable during the same hours, and were placed on similiar uncataloged shelves. The importance of these libraries is shown by their very existence and the intense interest of students in their growth even though the libraries are not essential to their studies.

The libraries were not an integral part of the learning process. They were, however, considered a very important part of the pre-Civil War college, directly utilized or not. The libraries were often chance accumulations or aggregations of books. Many were gifts, books that had been discarded by their owners, and were predominantly in the area of theology. The collections grew slowly, especially at Oberlin, perhaps due to the scarcity of funds, but more likely due to the lack of usefulness for the students' studies.

In 1850, there were only five library collections that numbered over 50,000 volumes. They were those of the Library of Congress, the Boston Athenaeum, the Philadelphia Library, Harvard College, and Yale College.[35] That only two colleges had libraries in excess of 50,000 volumes supports the idea that large libraries were not essential to the operation of an early nineteenth century college. In fact, the library at Yale would not have been included in this list if it were not for the books in the libraries of the student societies. The main Yale library had only 20,000 volumes.[36] The libraries of Western Reserve at 7,634 volumes and Oberlin at 4,000 were not unusually small when compared to other college libraries.[37]

It must also be remembered that it was not until 1876 that libraries in general began to improve with the formation of the American Library Association and with the increased efficiency brought by the discipline of library science that allowed easier access. It is only then that college libraries could be used as a place to conduct research.

A general view of the student society libraries finds certain similarities from college to college. Almost all of the societies, literary and specialized, had libraries. Some did provide books that were not available in the college library and this additional material often included more recent works and authors of a less religious and more intellectual nature.[38] It is generally thought that these libraries provided source materials for the debates, orations, and essays that were so much a part of the literary society exercises and thus served a research function. It is also thought by historians such as Rudolph that these libraries allowed the students greater access to holdings by having longer hours and by allowing the students to select books from the shelves. Rudolph felt that the societies were able to augment the classical curriculum of the nineteenth century college by compensating in the areas of science, English literature, history, music, and art.[39] Given this somewhat twentieth century view of libraries and given additional support from student reminiscences, the student society libraries gained permanent and lasting fame.

Following this rather general view of college and literary society libraries, a more specific examination made at Oberlin and Western Reserve Colleges finds that the college library at Western Reserve was provided for at the organizational meeting of the trustees on March 1, 1826. A librarian was named six months prior to the appointment of the first

teacher. Early acquisitions were gifts and not purchases, and this resulted from the efforts of the soliciting agent who requested books when unable to obtain money for the college.[40] The Oberlin College library was provided for in the first by-laws of the college, written in 1834.[41] The small library was also mentioned in the first annual report of the College and the officials had great hopes that the friends of the institution would increase the library with the addition of useful works.[42] As the two colleges grew and became more fully established the college libraries also became larger. Catalogues of acquisitions were maintained at both institutions.[43] Specific rules for the libraries were written and remained basically unchanged from 1826 to 1861. The library at Western Reserve was open for two hours on Saturday, and a limit was placed upon the number of books that a studetnt was allowed to draw. The stacks were closed to the student.[44] It is not surprising that the use of the library was limited, for if all of the students were to descend upon the library during the limited hours the library was open, the facilities, the catalog, and the librarian would have been overwhelmed.

It is perhaps because of this lack of availability that the student society libraries were founded immediately at Western Reserve and in 1856 at Oberlin. There are then two questions that must be answered. Were the students societies' libraries more accessible; and, the second, and more significant problem in terms of the myth, were the holdings signigicantly different from those of the college library? While these are the important questions to be investigated, the matters of pride and tradition cannot be forgotten in the establishment of student libraries. The student libraries had some of the same problems with their book selection as did the college libraries. The students also received a large portion of their

books as gifts. These were usually gifts from former members who attended the anniversary celebrations and fond memories of old college days often moved them to make non-monetary contributions to their "old society."[45] The library report of the Franklin Society of Western Reserve gives a clear account of the desires of the society in relationship to their library holdings:

> There is perhaps no one thing which so much gives character to a society abroad, as its Library. A good library is always an attraction and will exhibit an astonshing influence . . . When we have exhausted the love of the past and our Treasury is overflowing, we can purchase books of less value . . . .[46]

This feeling that the society should look to the past for books that have stood the test of time and that members should not present the library with books that they no longer value constitute the remaining ideas in the report.[47]

There was often an expressed interest in the founding of student society libraries at Oberlin and yet thereis little evidence extant that reveals why the Oberlin student literary societies did not actually, develop libraries until 1856, twenty years after their founding. In an 1858 report William Douglas Scrimgeour, the librarian of the College Societies' Library Association, shed some light upon the matter:

> Our students have for years felt and regretted the want of such a collection of books as would stimulate their thoughts, assist them in their couse, and be a fountain of reference from shich they could steadily draw. The heterogeneous and unsatisfactory character of the college collection has been long known and acknowledged. Attempts have again and again been made to remedy this defect, but generally without success.
>
> But about four years and a half ago, the College Literary Societies endeavored to unite on some plan of establishing a joint library. After nearly two years' discussion and consultation--during which the scheme seemed often on the point of being given up--a constitution was agreed upon, and a Library organized in April, 1855.[48]

Yet the libraries at Oberlin, when they began in the 1850's, were different in only one way from the student libraries of the other colleges, and in a very short period of time had similar holdings to other society libraries. From the start, the libraries of the societies were joint. All of the men's societies founded the College Societies Library Association, CSLA, and the ladies formed the Ladies' Society Library Association. In 1872 these two groups merged and formed the Union Library Association.[49] Even in the formation of student libraries, the faculty had a hand. Professor Morgan came to the societies and discussed the subject of a library for the societies and the final constitution was adopted two years after this visit.[50]

Perhaps this delay came from the need for time, effort, and money in the maintenance of the student libraries at both Oberlin and Western Reserve. Carefully kept records allow a comparison to be made of the books in the student library with those in the college library, at least in the case of Oberlin College.[51] The results of this survey are of interest because the findings indicate that the similarities that existed between the holdings of the college libraries and the student libraries were greater than their differences and the hours that the student libraries were open were often the same as those of the college library. Despite student concern the libraries do not appear to have compensated for the inadequacies of the college library nor were the books more readily available.

The ladies' literary societies library was found to be the most similar to the college library of all the student libraries studied. Twenty-six of the forty-two, or about two-thirds of the books studied in the Ladies' Library Association listing were found in the college library. There were 268 volumes in 1859 and 152 were added in the next two years.

The works jointly held were not only religious works, the backbone of all nineteenth century libraries; but in history, biography, and philosophy as well. The works not held by the Oberlin College Library but held by the Ladies' Library Association tended to follow the existing pattern of the College library. They were not all novels, but included such works as the Proceedings of American Assoication of Science and a book called Solomon and Wordsworth's Poems. More sentimental titles such as Bitter Street, Wuthering Heights, Moral Aspects of City Life, and Tom Brown at Oxford were not held by the College. The titles above, selected merely as examples, help to build the case that there was no significant difference in the kinds of holdings of the Oberlin College library and of the Ladies' Literary Association. In this instance the student library of 420 volumes did not compensate for deficiencies in the college library library.[52]

The College Societies' Library Association, CSLA, had a very simple stated purpose. The male students were attempting to secure for themselves the benefits of a library.[53] It would appear from the analysis of their holdings that they did just that and in a very short period of time. The association in the period from 1856 to 1861 had accumulated 1,000 volumes compared to the 420 of the ladies' association. Information on the classification of the men's library comes from the 1858 report of William Scrimgeour. The classification system used was that of the Bouilland Catalogue of 1679; and included books in the areas of Theology, Juris Jurisprudence, Science and Art, Belles Lettres, and History.[54] While works of theology were the largest unit in the Oberlin College Library, they were only eight percent of the books found in the student library. The percentage of history books was about equal in both the College and

student libraries. Science and Belles Lettres were the categories where books were added at the expense of works on theology. Both libraries evidently had fiction. The College library had seventy-four fiction works and 138 titles classed as Polite Literature. The societies' library had 107 words classified as General Literature that included works in the holdings of fiction, but still not enough difference existed to maintain the myth that the College libraries contributed significantly to expanding a fixed curriculum by providing works in English literature, history, music, and art[55] If the sample is a true one, and its random selection would indicate that it is, then a more important assumption can be made that availability of books in the College library was not taken into consideration when books were purchased by the student libraries at Oberlin.

Purchases of books for both Oberlin and Western Reserve student libraries were given careful consideration. The minutes of the societies indicate this. A note in the Philozetian minutes exhibited the members' concern for completing certain periodical collections that their library held, and the secretary called the roll to raise funds for this purchase.[56] Wise use of available funds was often a part of the discussion. At Western Reserve some attempt was male to avoid the duplication of holdings in the existing society libraries in order to free funds for the purchase of different books.[57] There is no evidence that this care was regularly taken at either Western Reserve and Oberlin. The faculty members did not aid the students in avoiding duplications but students, in raising funds for the library, admonished the assisting faculty to purchase the books at wholesale prices.[58]

The concept that the books in the student libraries were more readily available has also contributed to the permanent fame of the student society libraries. There is a great deal of similarity in the rules of the college and student society libraries and one finds evidence that the students modeled their rules after those of the college library. In the laws of the society of Phi Delta of Western Reserve, the article referring to the library states that "the regulations of the library shall be the same with those of college library."[59] The Adelphic Society too stated in their regulations that the time and rules of drawing shall be regulated by the College library.[60] The above would certainly indicate that the books were not any more readily available in the student society libraries or that they were used more regularly.

"It is a pleasure unknown to strangers to go into a library room on the day of drawing books and sit there unmolested and read its valuable documents."[61] This was not the only statement found in the library reports that indicates that the wonderful books found in the libraries often went unused. One can also find contradictory statements such as the following: "Members frequently ask and take the privilege of entering the library for the purpose of reference."[62] From all indications, the books from the student libraries did circulate. The library report of the CSLA of August 5, 1859, indicated that there were 1,023 volumes in the library and that 877 had been drawn. The subsequent report, October 4, 1859, indicated that 480 books had been drawn of the 1,051 volumes in the library.[63] Circualtion of books took place at Western Reserve's student libraries, too. The Phi Delta report found that the library had received "its due share of patronage" but also expressed doubts on use: "If there has been as much reading done as there has been drawing of books, it

is not extravagant to conclude that as a general thing, those sojourning at Western Reserve College are hugely enlightened."[64] Close scrutiny of the lists of books drawn indicates that a few people often took many books. It would indeed be difficult to assess actual use of material taken from the libraries.

The above investigation has shown that there were some differences between the holdings of the College library and of the student libraries. The differences do not, at least in the case of Oberlin, show any discernible pattern. The general assumptions made for Oberlin can be extended to Western Reserve and other western colleges as well. Duplication occurred in all categories.[65] The books in the student libraries perhaps are of a latter vintage, but it must be remembered that the bulk of the student libraries at Oberlin were gathered after 1857, and at the other western colleges, between 1840 to 1860. The fact that they purchased the same books held by the college libraries and that they would observe the same kind of rules might indicate that the students were not dissatisfied with the college libraries regulations. It would further indicate that they did not feel the need to open their libraries for more hours because the books, while useful for society activities, were not essential to their primary goal of completing their college course.

The student libraries were unique. The very fact that they existed was significant. The students could have given their gifts of books to the college libraries if they wished to, but they chose instead to have their own libraries. They did not trust themselves to run the libraries totally on their own, and instead modeled their rules after the college libraries and called on the faculty to aid them with the selection of their books.[66] They purchased books that they knew about because these

books had proved themselves by a long existence. Further, these books were valuable enough to be in the college library. The libraries did summplment the college library but did not make up for their deficiencies and they did not summplementa fixed curriculum. The student libraries had their own failings and deficiencies; but were, however, an exciting and important part of the student societies. They do not deserve the acclaim given them by the college historian because the libraries did not change or modify the curriculum of the college. The student societies' libraries followed the existing pattern set for them by the college libraries, and the students founded these libraries out of a sense of tradition and pride. It is best to value these libraries of the students in their own words: "Do we not feel richer every time an addition is made to the Library."[67]

The most succinct evidence to support the hypothesis that these societies were but a small part of the established nineteenth century college comes from the discovery made by this writer concerning the membership of these student groups. A caustic account of the history of Oberlin College written by a student of the period, Delazon Smith, led to a study of society membership. Smith noted that there was very little time for real study, and yet, there were many student societies. If the student did not attend the student societies, "he would do it at the sacrifice of his reputation, for an individual who does not go heart and hand into all the measures of Oberlin is not desired to remain in the place."[68] Almost all of the students belonged to at least one society, and the faculty often had a hand in inspiring, founding, and populating the societies.

All of the students belonged to the many societies at Western Reserve College indicating that, here too, it was the accepted procedure

for a student to attach himself to one or more of the groups. The faculty concerned itself with maintaining equal numbers in the groups that existed:

> In view of the instructors, it will be conducive to the welfare of the two Literary Societies in this college to receive for the future each an equal number of members alphabetically of such as shall hereafter enter the regular classes . . . .[69]

Without question, the majority of all college students belonged to at least one student society.

Those who have studied college histories are not always aware of the extent of the student society membership that this writer's study uncovered. All but nine of the students at Western Reserve College who were officially enrolled belonged to one or more society. This statistic becomes even more impressive when it is known that it is only nine of 384 listed students. Ninety-eight percent of the students at Western Reserve College in the period between 1839 and 1860 belonged to the student societies. It can be stated that the figure was 100 percent as illegible writing and names like Smith account for some of the nine. This seems to prove beyond any question that the student societies were not limited to attracting only a certain kind of student, one who got better grades, one who was more interested in social reform, or one who was in any way distinctive from his fellow students.[70]

The faculty minutes of Oberlin and Western Reserve College give additional support to the view that the student societies were places where students could practice the skills of rhetoric and composition. The societies of Oberlin and Western Reserve enjoyed a very special rapport with their faculties. It was a paternalistic arrangement--the faculty, the father; societies, the dutiful sons and daughters. It is

not at all surprising that the professors and the trustees agreeed with student society intent as described in this article. The society meetings were excellent places in which to practice skills only minimally provided for in the classical college cirriculm. The faculties approved of the societies but did not relinquish control of them. Western Reserve's faculty authorized a new society by providing that the constitution and by-laws of the society had to be approved by the president of the college and that the society be open to the president at all times. This was reinforced by a law of the college that went unchanged in the entire period examined.[71] The students of the early nineteenth century at Oberlin and Western Reserve, and indeed at any other college, did not attempt to revolt against the stystem and, in fact, approved of the interest and the control of the faculty.

The educational philosophies of the two institutions involved help to explain faculty desire for control of the student extra-curricular activities. Charles Storrs, the President of Western Reserve, stated his concern for the development of the whole man and his concern for avoiding foolish amusements.[72] The original circular of Oberlin College also contained statements about providing the "best in moral and physical education." It was noted that there was not single course of study that could achieve their goal of a pious elite.[73] This would indicate an early understanding of the complexity of learning and the value of informal education. Frederick Rudolph has termed this total education as the "collegiate way." This tradition was fundamental and all-encompassing for it involved a total way of life for the college student. The "collegiate way" depended upon a residential setting that included a curriculum, a library, a faculty, and students. All of this would be found in a rural

setting that was dependent upon dormitories and dining halls and "permeated by paternalism."[74] THe faculty relationship that existed between the professors and the student societies fits perfectly into the picture of the "collegiate way," and it is surprising that Rudolph missed this connection and saw a more creative role for the societies.

Tradition, the ideas of those who chose to be professors, perhaps accounts for a paternalistic attitude toward the student societies.[75] However, a more elusive reason could have been significant. It has been suggested that the college administrators and teachers realized the wisdom of allowing some freedom to dissent on the part of the student. A perfect vehicle for this would have been the student society where current questions such as abolition and intelligence differences between the races and the sexes could be discussed in a contained manner. This idea was not accepted at all colleges. Lane Semianry in Cincinnati provided an example of opoostion in the following statement from the trustee minutes: "Association and discussions foreign to the course of instruction, distract the attention, and retard improvement especially in the case of topics of public interest and popular excitement."[76] However, Oberlin and Western Reserve affirmed their faith and belief in some form of academic freedom, at least in the area of free speech. The Board of Trustees of Western Reserve stated:

> Resolved that we adopt as our own act, reiterate the sentiment contained in a printed report of the Prudential Committee in 1935 [sic]. Freedom of discussion both among themselves, and in presence of the Faculty is allowed students on all subjects, and no restraint has been laid on them in this particular either by the Faculty or the Trustees . . . .[77]

The fact that the "Lane Rebels" came to Oberlin set the stage for this same freedom of discussion. One cannot reconstruct the motivation of

the faculty and trustees of these institutions to discover whether they were motivated by the principles of academic freedom or by the more paternalistic idea of allowing a little freedom to growing boys and girls. Nonetheless, the evidence that has been presented indicates that it is the latter.

The intent of the faculty in allowing the establishment of societies has been considered, but the means of faculty control should not be ignored. The spirit of the faculty permeated the organization of the societies and their continuing activities. The students asked first if the various societies could be formed.[78] They than asked for approval of their constitutions. This was not always a mere formality; the Society of Natural History at Oberlin received some recommended changes from the faculty.[79] This seeking of approval was not unique to the institutions of the Western Reserve. At Trinity College, President Craven wrote the constitution of one of the literary societies and was an ex-officio member.[80] Control did not end with the composition and approval of the constitution but continued with the approval of commencement speeches and topics, meeting times and places, and even extended to the selection of members. In the Handel Society of Western Reserve, it even resulted in a faculty request to remove some objectionable words from a song being performed[81] and to the dismissal of a student, Frederick A. Hudson, for "keeping cards in his room; improper and ungentlemanly conduct in the Literary Society which the faculty considered as under their patronage . . . ."[82]

The careful surveillance imposed upon the student societies illustrates the concern that the faculty had for the students. There is no doubt that they felt themselves a part, if only an advisory one, of these groups.

There is also no doubt that the students readily accepted this control and were even offended if the system was attacked. In the periodical published by the literary societies of Oberlin, one notes an attack upon disrespect for college faculties. The students warn against an attempt to undermine the job of the faculty, improving moral character.[83] Although lines of communication were always open between the students and the faculty, in only a very vew instances did the student societies question the decisions of the faculty. Even in these few instances, the decision of the faculty was always final. The faculty was indeed the father and the society members, the children. The societies were intended to be organizations for moral and literary self improvement by both the students and the faculties.

The effect of the student societies upon the students cannot and should not be isolated from the many other influences around them. The effect cannot be separated from the impact which their families with particular standards set at an early age for the students. The fact that they desired a college education, sometimes at great personal travail, set them apart from the rest of the population. The fact that the student often envisioned a certain mission or role for himself helped to make a nineteenth century future leader. The family that he lived with while at Oberlin or the men that he boarded with at Western Reserve must have had some impact upon the ideas forming in his mind. The student society did have its place in this multiplicity of influences. In addition to an opportunity to discuss current events and improve literary skills that the society represented, the sentimental role of forming friendships cannot be dismissed. The closing statement in the oldest society minute

minute book indicated this feeling: "The sacred ties of college life made sacred this book."[84]

The student groups were formed with literary and moral self improvement as their stated and real goal. Social intercourse with fellow students was certainly a by-product of these groups. From the fact that student societies enjoyed a fairly long history, and during their entire history maintained faculty support and faculty favor, one can judge that they were a success. They were not a means to achieve social reform nor were they anything but an integral part of the nineteenth century college and hence nineteenth century establishment.

College Library Titles

TABLE 1

WESTERN RESERVE COLLEGE LIBRARY (1850)

1,989 titles
3,872 volumes (excluding replicates)
4,609 volumes (excluding replicates)

		Titles		Volumes (excluding replicates)	
I.	English Literature (including American)				
	1. Collective works	16		45	
	2. Oratory	7		15	
	3. Poetry	43		62	
	4. Essay	22		40	
	5. Miscellaneous	11		19	
	6. Encyclopedia	14		59	
	7. Bibliography	4		6	
	8. Philology	27		38	
	9. Criticism	36		62	
	10. Education	16		17	
	11. Reading & Elocution	21		36	
		217	(10.9%)	397	(10.5%)
II.	Hebrew	28	(1.4%)	35	(0.9%)
III.	Greek	86	(4.3%)	116	(3.0%)
IV.	Latin	151	(7.6%)	164	(4.2%)
V.	Modern Languages	46	(2.3%)	58	(1.5%)
VI.	Biography	119	(6.0%)	165	(4.3%)
VII.	History				
	1. Secular	94		166	
	2. Religious	56		99	
		150	(7.5%)	265	(6.8%)

TABLE 1--Continued

		Titles		Volumes (excluding replicates)	
VIII.	Geography and Chronology	26	(1.3%)	43	(1.1%)
IX.	Travel and Voyages	34	(1.7%)	51	(1.3%)
X.	Mathematics and Physics				
	1. Transactions & Memoirs	8		129	
	2. Astronomy	51		58	
	3. Physics	92		102	
	4. Mathematics	106		119	
	5. Arts	7		7	
		264	(13.2%)	415	(10.7%)
XI.	Natural History	48	(2.4%)	48	(1.2%)
XII.	Chemistry	10	(0.5%)	14	(0.3%)
XIII.	Medicine	27	(1.4%)	31	(0.8%)
XIV.	Natural Science				
	1. Intellectual Philosophy	46		68	
	2. Logic	7		7	
	3. Ethics	8		8	
		61	(3.1%)	83	(2.1%)
XV.	Biblical Theology				
	1. Commentaries	67		168	
	2. Sacred Literature	49		77	
	3. Hermeneutics	12		24	
	4. Archeology	14		14	
		142	(7.1%)	283	(7.3%)
XVI.	Doctrinal Theology				
	1. Collective works	31		71	
	2. General Treatises	17		38	
	3. Particular Doctrines	138		159	
		186	(9.3%)	268	(6.9%)

TABLE 1--Continued

		Titles		Volumes (excluding replicates)	
XVII.	Practical Theology				
	1. Collective Works	8		43	
	2. Eclesiastical Polity	75		75	
	3. Pastoral Theology	8		8	
	4. Hoimletics	11		13	
	5. Sermons	87		101	
	6. Practical Religion	239		279	
		428	(21.4%)	511	(13.2%)
XVIII.	Civil Science				
	1. Jurisprudence	28		41	
	2. Political Economy	6		8	
	3. Legislative & Diplomatic	42		771	
		76	(3.8%)	820	(21.2%)
XIX.	Periodicals				
	1. Religion	40		192	
	2. Literary & Scientific	25		232	
		65	(3.3%)	424	(10.9%)
	Grand Total	2164	(108.5%)	4191	(108.2%)

NOTE: Apparently some titles and volumes were recorded under more than one category. This accounts for the grand totals given directly above exceeding to totals given for the library. It also explains the sum of the percentages exceeding 100%. Source of this material was the catalogue of the Library, 1850, Case Western Reserve University MSS, Freiberger Library.

TABLE 2

OBERLIN COLLEGE LIBRARY (1859)

Distribution of books up to accession number 5400	Titles	
I. Arts		
Fine Arts	43	
Manufacture	8	
Mechanical Arts	30	
Patent Office Reports	0	
	81	(1.5%)
II. Belles Lettres		
Dictionaries	97	
Drama	32	
Essays and Reviews	265	
Grammar	75	
Greek Classics and Grammar	80	
Latin Classics and Grammar	108	
Periodicals	20	
Philology	59	
Poetry	205	
Polite Literature	138	
Rhetoric and Criticism	49	
Stories (Fiction)	74	
	1202	(22.3%)
III. History		
Archeology	45	
Biography	837	
Census and Statistics	52	
Sacred History	145	
Secular History	332	
Travels	152	
	1563	(29.0%)
IV. Metaphysics		
Christian Ethics	42	
Logic	10	
Mathematics	71	
Metaphysical Philosophy	80	
Psychology	52	
	255	(4.7%)
V. Miscellaneous		
Catalogs	11	
Encyclopedias	60	
Education	190	
Maps and Charts	13	
Miscellaneous	15	
	289	(5.4%)

TABLE 2--Continued

Distribution of books up to accession number 5400	Titles	
VI. Physics		
Agriculture	40	
Anatomy and Surgery	17	
Astronomy	57	
Botany	36	
Chemistry	68	
Ethnology	10	
Geography	43	
Geology	42	
Medicine and Hygiene	108	
Meteorology	28	
Natural Philosophy	64	
Science, General	47	
Surveys	28	
Physiology	58	
Temperance	23	
Zoology	54	
	723	(13.4%)
VII. Politics		
Commerce	15	
Congressional Documents	12	
Diplomacy and Foreign Relations	5	
Laws and Jurisprudence	33	
Navigation and Naval Affairs	14	
Political Economy	35	
Political Ethics	32	
Political Speeches and Essays	64	
Records of Legislative Bodies	0	
Reports of Cabinet Officers	5	
Slavery	70	
Social Science	32	
War	26	
	343	(6.4%)
VIII. Theology		
Atonement	40	
Christology	64	
Church Organization	44	
Commentaries	34	
Concordance	18	
Creeds, Catechism, and Demonology	24	
Evidences and Defense of Christ	115	
Faith	32	
Future State	42	

TABLE 2--Continued

Distribution of books up to accession number 5400	Titles	
VIII. Theology (Continued)		
Homiletics and Pastoral Theology	42	
Inspiration	23	
Introduction to Biblical Study	67	
Justification	24	
Missionary Intelligence	34	
Natural Theology	35	
Perseverance of the Saints	5	
Practical Religion	209	
Prayer	27	
Predestination	2	
Regeneration	35	
Religious Essay	239	
Religious Periodicals	7	
Revivals	7	
Sabbath	30	
Sacraments	43	
Sanctification	16	
Scriptures	71	
Sects	49	
Sermons	242	
Sin and Depravity	34	
Systematic Divinity	27	
Trinity	29	
	1710	(31.7%)
Grand Total	6166	(114.4%)

NOTE: Some titles were apparently recorded under more than one category giving a grand total number of volumes exceeding 5400. For the same reason, the percentage figures total more than 100%.

SOURCES: Oberlin College Library Catalogue of Authors, Oberlin College MSS, Oberlin College Library; Oberlin College Library Catalogue of Subjects, I, Oberlin College MSS, Oberlin College Library; Oberlin College Library Record of Books Drawn, 1835-1888, Oberlin College MSS, Oberlin College Library.

Literary Society Library Lists

Of 420 books on the accession list through the end of 1860, every tenth book in order of accession is given below.

TABLE 3

OBERLIN COLLEGE LADIES' LITERARY SOCIETIES LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

	List of Books		
10	The Spectator	*	0
20	Modern British Essays - McCaulay	*	0
30	Milmen's Gibbons' Rome	*	0
40	History of England - Hume	*	0
50	The Blithedale Romance - Hawthorne	*	0
60	Dante	*	0
70	History of the Indians of North America	*	
80	The Book of Martyrs - Fox	*	0
90	Whittier's Works	*	0
100	Patent Office Report of 1856	*	0
110	Philosophy of Sir William Hamilton	*	0
120	Proceedings of the American Association of Science		0
130	Niles Register	*	0
140	Niles Register	*	0
150	Noctes Ambrossance		0
160	Dutch Republic	*	
170	Arctic Exploration - Hayes	*	
180	Josephus	*	0
190	Solomon Northrup		0
200	Memoirs of Philip to Rachel Price	*	0
210	Catholic and Protestant Nations Compared - Rousail		0
220	Wordsworth Poems	*	
231	Prescott's Conquest of Mexico	*	
240	Traveller - Leasing		
250	Washington - Leasing		
260	Wrecks and Rescuers		0
270	Burke on the Sublime and Beautiful		0
280	Gold Foil - Gitcombe		
290	Congressional Glove, Volumes 1-6	*	0
300	Memoirs of Mrs. M.E. VanLennep	*	0
310	Conquest of Peru - Prescott	*	
320	Charles V - Prescott		

TABLE 3 --Continued

	List of Books		
330	Philosophical Writers, Volumes I and II		
340	Divine Aspects of Human Society - Huntington	*	
350	Bitter Sweet - Gitcombe		
360	Philosophy of Skepticism - Walker	*	
370	Schwegler's History of Philosophy	*	
380	Smooth Stones - C.H. Spurgeon		O
390	History of the United Netherlands, Volumes I and II	*	
400	Wuthering Heights - Ellis Bell		
410	Moral Aspects of City Life		O
418	Tom Brown at Oxford		

* Present in the Oberlin College Library (26 of 42)
O Donor given

SOURCES: Oberlin College Ladies' Literary Societies' Library Association, 185?, Oberlin College MSS, Oberlin College Library.

TABLE 4

COLLEGE LITERARY SOCIETIES' LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
"CSLA"

This table was prepared by William Douglas Scrimgeour, "College Societies' Library Association," Oberlin Evangelist, XV (January 20, 1858), p. 15. The percentage figures are from Jennie Streeter Tucker, "Oberlin College Library, 1833-1885," Unpublished M.S. dissertation, Western Reserve University School of Library Science, 1953.

	Titles	Volumes
Theology		67 (8.2%)
Jurisprudence		179 (22.0%)
American	174v.	
British	5v.	
Science and Arts		143 (17.6%)
Metaphysics and Ethics	35	
Political Economy	36	
Physics and Mathematics	45	
Natural Science	5	
Useful and Fine Arts	22	
Belles Lettres		223 (27.45)
Poetry	116	
General Literature	107	
History		185 (27.75%)
American History	31	
American Biography	26	
American Topography	29	
European History	51	
European Biography	19	
European Topography	4	
Asiatic and African History and Biography	2	
Asiatic Topography	11	
Ecclesiastical and Philosophical	12	
Miscellaneous, being English 7, American 8		15 (.02%)
Whole number of volumes		812

Literary Society Library Lists

From accessions up to number 1000 (approximately 1860), every tenth entry is sampled below.

TABLE 5

OBERLIN COLLEGE LITERARY SOCIETIES LIBRARY ASSOCIATION "CSLA"

	List of Books		
	Theology		
183	The Eclipse of Faith - Rogers	*	
270	The Works of Lyman Beecher	*	
353	Discourses on the Christian Spirit and Life		
396	Discourses on Christian Body and Form	*	
411	Religious Thoughts and Opinions - Humboldt	*	
83	Chalmer's Sermons	*	
853	The Grayson Letters - Rogers		
	Jurisprudence		
92	Trial of Freeman		
200	Congressional Glove	*	O
481	Citizens' Manual - Young		
653	Jefferson's Complete Works		O
663	Life and Works of John Adams	*	O
673	Annals of Congress		O
713	Congressional Debates	*	O
743	Congressional Globe	*	O
783	Public Land Laws		O
869	Law of Business for Business Men		
78	Works of Edmund Burke	*	
	Science and Arts		
223	Work of Benjamin Franklin	*	
259	Metaphysical and Ethical Science - Bowen	*	
428	Johnson's Works - Two Volumes	*	
643	Sir William Hamilton's Discussions	*	
258	The Science of Government - Goodrich	*	
398	Recent Social Theories	*	
456	Agricultural Report - Indiana 1854-5		O
792	Reports on Finances	*	O
975	Diplomatic Correspondence	*	O
991	American State Papers	*	O
263	Rose's Chemical Tables	*	
501	Silliman's Journal		O
513	Account of Tornado near New Harmony, Ind.		O
523	American Journal of Science and Arts	*	O
859	Annual of Scientific Discovery		
329	Breck's Book of Flowers	*	

TABLE 5--Continued

	List of Books		
	Science and Arts (Continued)		
261	Shaw's Civil Architecture		
538	Patent Office Report 1852-53	*	0
500	American Farm Book		0
	Belles Lettres		
57	The British Poets (series)		
121	In Memoriam - Tennyson		
165	Keats' Poems	*	
305	Baily's Festus	*	
347	Maud - Tennyson		
457	Hyperion - Longfellow	*	
462	Elizabeth B. Browning's Poems	*	
807	Emerson's Poems	*	
29	Addison's Works	*	
89	British Essayists (Series)		
160	Literary and Historical Miscellanies - Bancroft	*	
248	One Hundred Boston Orators		
337	Autographs of Freedom		
367	North American Review	*	
395	Euthanasy		
438	Miscellanies of Lord Brougham		0
554	Coleridge's Works	*	
574	Washington Irving's Works	*	
805	Emerson's Essays	*	
839	Edgar Allen Poe's Works		
872	Ohio Journal of Education		0
884	Edinburgh Review	*	0
937	Littell's Living Age		0
961	Dickens' Works		0
	History		
1	Bancroft's History of the U.S.	*	
14	Conquest of Peru - Prescott	*	
246	History of New England - John Winthrop	*	
549	Thirty Years in the U.S. Senate - Benton		0
877	Exiles of Florida - Giddings		
93	Memoirs of Robert Troup Paine	*	0
279	Sparks' American Biography	*	
418	Life of J.C. Fremont - Upham		0
810	Memoirs of Carvasso	*	0
854	Life of Dr. Kane - Dr. Elden		

* Present in the Oberlin College Library (40 of 71)
0 Donor given

SOURCES: Oberlin College Societies' Library Association Classified Catalogue of the Books Committee, Oberlin College MSS, Oberlin College Library and Oberlin College Societies' Library Association Index of Subjects in College Societies' Library, Oberlin College MSS, Oberlin College Library.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Jurgen Herbst, "American College History: Re-Examination Underway," History Education Quartely, 14 (Summer 1974), : 260.

[2]Frederick Rudolph, The American College and University: A History, (New York: Vintage Books, 1962): 144.

[3]David Allmendinger, Jr., "The Dangers of Ante-Bellum Student Life", Journal of Social History, 7 (Fall 1978): 80.

[4]David Potts, "Students and the Social History of American Higher Education", History of Education Quarterly, 15 (Fall 1975): 323.

[5]John G. White Letter to Arthur C. Ludlow, February 26, 1924, Case Western Reserve University MS, Archives, Cutler Letters.

[6]Wilson Smith, "Apologia pro Alma Matre: The College as Community in Ante-Bellum America", The Hofstadter Aegis: A Memorial (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974): 135.

[7]Douglas Sloan, "Harmony, Chaos, and Consensus: The American College Curriculum", The Teachers College Record, 73 (December 1971): 236.

[8]John S. Brubacher and Willis Rudy, Higher Education in Transition: A History of American Colleges and Universities, 1636-1976, 3rd ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1976): 47.

[9]Robert L. Church and Michael Sedlak, Education in the United States: An Interpretive History, (New York: The Free Press, 1976):34-35. Richard Hofstadter, Academic Freedom in the Age of the College, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955): 209; Rudolph, The American College:144 and George P. Schmidt, The Liberal Arts College: A Chapter in American Cultural History, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1957), p. 98.

[10]Donald G. Tewsksbury, The Founding of American Colleges and Universities Before the Civil War: With Particular Reference to Religious Influences Bearing Upon the College Movement, (New York: Bureau of Publication, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1932), p. 124.

[11]S. Fletcher, A History of Oberlin College: From Its Foundation Through the Civil War, II (Chicago: R. Donnelly & Sons Co., 1943), p. 835.

[12]Minutes of the Adelphic Society, April 7, 1830, and April 14, 1830. Case Western Reserve University MSS, Freiberger Library.

[13]Emilie R. Comings and Francis J. Hosford, "The Story of L.L.S. The First Women's Club of America," Oberlin Alumni Magazine, 2? (March, 1927): 10.

[14]Thomas Spencer Harding, College Literary Societies (New York: Pagent-Poseidon, 1971), p. 543.

[15]Letter, Elizur Wright, Sr., to Elizur Wright, Jr., April 25, 1825, Western Reserve Historical Society MSS, Elizur Wright, Sr., Papers, #1994.

[16]On September 3, 1856, the Phi Delta Society recorded that the Young Men's Lyceum approved the constitution of the Phi Delta Society but suggested a change. Minutes of the Phi Delta Society, September 3, 1856. Oberlin College MSS, Oberlin College Library.

[17]Constitution of the Union Society, 1841-1850, Oberlin College MSS, Oberlin College Library.

[18]Constitution of the Adelphic Society, 1830-1834, Case Western Reserve University MSS, Freiberger Library.

[19]Constitution of the Phi Delta Society, 1840-1860, Preamble, Case Western Reserve University MSS, Freiberger Library.

[20]Minutes of the Adelphic Society, December 6, 1837, Case Western Reserve University MSS, Freiberger Library.

[21]Constitution of the Handel Society, 1828-1836, Case Western Reserve University MSS, Freiberger Library.

[22]Constitution of the Phi Beta Kappa Society, Case Western Reserve University MSS, Freiberger Library.

[23]Constitution of the Theological Literary Society, 1844, Oberlin College MSS, Oberlin Cillege Libary.

[24]Clarence P. Shedd, Two Centuries of Student Christian Movements: Their Origin and Intercollegiate Life (New York: Association Press, 1934), pp. 1-2.

[25]David Potter, Debating in the Colonial Chartered Colleges: An Historical Survey, 1642 to 1900 (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1944), p. 56.

[26]Frank B. Davis, "The Literary Societies of Selected State Universities of the Lower South" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Louisiana State University, 1949), p. 363 and 418.

[27]Virgil E. David, "The Literary Societies in 'Old Miami' From 1825 to 1873" (Unpublished Master's thesis, Miami University, 1950), p. 16.

[28]Constitution of the Phi Delta Society, 1840-1860, Article 4, #15.

[29]Frederick G. Wright, Story of My Life and Work (Oberlin: Bibliotheca Sacra Co., 1916), p. 74.

[30]Letter, S. H. Whittlesey to C. Cutler, November 6, 1845, Case Western Reserve University MS, Archives, Culter Letters.

[31]Letter, A. S. Kedzie to C. Cutler, March 20, 1876, Case Western Reserve University MS, Archives, Cutler Letters.

[32]Letter, Mary Ann Adams to John Keep, July 10, 1839, Oberlin College MS, Archives, Robert Fletcher Papers.

[33]Richard Hofstadter and Wilson Smith (ed.) American Higher Education A Documentary History, I (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1961) p. 256.

[34]Harding, College Literary Societies, : 55-178.

[35]W. N. Chattin Carlton, "College Libraries in the Mid-nineteenth Century," Library Journal, XXXII (1907), : 479,

[36]Ibid., : 480.

[37]Fourth Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, To the Senate and House of Representatives Showing the Operations, Expenditures, and Condition of the Institution During the Year 1819 (Washington: Printed by the Printers to the Senate, 1850), : 172-173.

[38]Rudolph, The American College, p. 143.

[39]Rudolph, The American College, p. 144.

[40]Frederick Waite, Western Reserve University, The Hudson Era: A History of Western Reserve College and Academy at Hudson, Ohio From 1826-1882 (Cleveland: Western Reserve University Press, 1943), p. 123.

[41]Harding, College Literary Societies. By-Laws of Oberlin College, 1834, Oberling College MS, Oberlin College Library. These limitations are often picked up by other authors. Harding felt that the students at Oberlin were not encouraged to draw books because they only were allowed the book that could be censored by the librarian. The students were also to be taken care of at the door of the library.

[42]Oberlin College, General Catalogue, 1834-36 (Oberlin: Oberlin College, 1834), p. 9.

[43]Waite, Western Reserve Universtiy, p. 123, and Catalogue of Books in the Oberlin College Institute Library, I, Oberlin College MSS, Oberlin College Library.

[44]The rules were obtained from the Laws of Western Reserve College, 1833, 1838, 1846, 1857. Case Western Reserve Universtiy MSS, Freiberger Library.

[45]A note found in the minutes of the Phi Delta Society was not unusual. The note stated that the society was in debt for the year and the honorary members suggested that they collect funds to defray this expense. The request received a cheerful response "showing that the spirit of old Phi Delta was still alive in their breast." Phi Delta Society Minutes, June 18, 1856, Case Western Reserve University MSS, Freigerger Library.

[46]Franklin Society Library Report, July 28, 1839, Case Western Reserve University MSS, Freiberger Library.

[47]Ibid.

[48]William Douglas Scrimgeour, "College Societies' Library Association" Oberlin Evangelist, XV (January 20, 1858), : 15.

[49]Librarians' Reports and Miscellaneous Papers of CSLA, June, 1872, Oberlin College MSS, Oberlin College Library.

[50]Dialectic Society Minutes, October 10, 1854, Oberlin College MSS, Oberlin College Library. Professor Morgan also acted as an agent for the Ladies' Societies Library Association. He evidently aided in the collection of funds and books. Oberlin Students' Monthly, I, (1858), :78.

[51]The holdings of the student society libraries were studied by comparing their books to those held in the college libraries. It was not possible to do an accurate comparison of the works in the Western Reserve College library with those held in the society libraries. It was possible to do this study for the books at Oberlin. The existing catalogues for the college library at Western Reserve were dated 1831 and 1851. At the time Waite wrote the history of the college, a hand written catalogue for the year 1860 existed, but this could not be located. There are catalogues for the society libraries. One is for the Adelphic Society for the years 1830-1833 and is extremely small, poorly written, and not categorized. The other one in existence is much more complete. It is for the Phi Delta Society for the year 1870. This catalogue is divided into categories, and the listings are legible. The college library catalogue for 1860 could not be located, and it was not considered a valid comparison for the college library to be compared on the basis of the 1870 catalogue. The earlier Adelphic work was not used because it covered such a short period of time and so few books.

This kind of examination was done for the books at Oberlin College. As noted earlier, an accurate acquisition list was maintained at Oberlin, and from this list the continuing catalogue was made usable. From the acquisition list one can determine which books were in the Oberlin College library from 1833 to 1861. The same procedure could be used for the listing for the Ladies' Library Society and for the men's organization, the College Societies Library Association. For each society library, every tenth book appearing on the listing was noted. Of the seventy-one titles sampled from the College Societies Library list, forty were found in the Oberlin College Library. This indicates statistically (to the 5% significance level) that more than 48% of the books in the society library duplicated titles to be found in the college library. Of forty-two titles sampled from the Ladies' Library Association list, twenty-six were also to be found in the college library. At the 5% significance level, this indicates more than 49% of the L.L.A. library titles could also be obtained from the college library. A complete listing of the results of this survey can be found on Table 3 for the Ladies' Society Library Association and on Tables 3 and 4 for the College Societies Library Association.

Catalog of the Library of the Ladies' Library Association, 1855, Oberlin College MSS, Oberlin College Library and Catalogue of the College Societies Library Association, 1852, Oberlin College MSS, Oberlin College Library.

[52]Catalogue of the Library of the Ladies' Library Association, 1855, Oberlin College MSS, Oberlin College Library.

[53]Constitution of the College Societies' Library Association, 1856, Oberlin College MSS, Oberlin College Library.

[54]Scrimgeour, "College,": 15

[55]Tucker, "Oberlin,": 53 and 67.

[56]Minutes of the Philozetian Society, March 24, 1847, Case Western Reserve University MSS, Freiberger Library.

[57]Phi Delta Society Minutes, November 19, 1841, Case Western Reserve University MSS, Freiberger Library. This same thing caused the greatest recorded dispute between the rival societies at Reserve, the Phi Delta and the Philozetian claimed they had always bought books with the other library in mind. They also said that they always opened the library to the members of Phi Delta. The dispute did not end in a friendly way. Phi Delta answered: "In our opinion the Society which has the shrewdness to obtain the best works first, should have the credit and advantage of doing so." Thus ended, at least temporarily, the cooperation between the societies at Western Reserve. Letter, Philozetian Society to Phi Delta Society, February 16, 1859, Case Western Reserve University MS, Freiberger Library.

[58]Minutes of the Theological Literary Society, March 22, 1854, Oberlin College MSS, Oberlin College Library.

[59]Constitution of the Phi Delta Society of Western Reserve College, 1840, Case Western Reserve University MSS, Freiberger Library.

[60]Constitution of the Adelphic Society, 1834, Case Western Reserve University MSS, Freiberger Library.

[61]Library Report of the Adelphic Society, January 3, 1838, Case Western Reserve University MSS, Freiberger Library.

[62]Union Literary Association Reports, I, August 3, 1860, Oberlin College MSS, Oberlin College Library.

[63]Ibid. August 5, 1859 and November 4, 1859.

[64]Phi Delta Society Library Reports, April 6, 1859, Case Western Reserve University MSS, Freiberger Library.

[65]A committee report of the Phi Delta Society at Western Reserve indicates that the Library had 1588 volumes in 1851. The books were divided into 21 categories such as Antiquities, Elocution, Religion, and Biography, Essays, and History ranked high in this library. Religion also contained a large number of volumes. Phi Delta Society Library Reports, December 11, 1851, Case Western Reserve University MSS, Freiberger Library.

[66]Aside from aiding the students in selecting works for the library, the faculty evidently had veto power.

[67]Franklin Society Library Reports, January 2, 1838, Case Western Reserve University MSS, Freiberger Library.

[68]Delazon Smith, A History of Oberlin: Or New Lights of the West Embracing the Conduct and Character of the Officers and Students of the Instituiton: Together With The Colonists, From the Founding of the Institution (Cleveland: S. Underhill & Sons, 1837), p. 15.

[69]Minutes of the Faculty, June 13, 1832, Case Western Reserve MSS, Archives.

[70]This information was gathered by comparing those students listed in the grade book against the society membership lists. A further check was made by checking the names of those students who signed the constitutions, a requirement for membership. Records of Grades of Western Reserve College, Case Western Reserve University MSS, Archives.

[71]Minutes of the Faculty, November 20, 1857. The exact wording of the college law states: No association of the students for literary, scientific, moral, or religious purposes, nor any orgainzed society of any description, shall exist in the college except by permission of the Faculty; and all principles, rules, and proceedings of any such society or association shall be subject to the inspection and control of the faculty.

Laws of Western Reserve College, 1833, 1835, 1838, 1846, 1857, Case Western REserve Universtiy MSS, Freiberger Library. The Faculty also maintained some control of behavior in the society meetings as evidenced in the dismissal of Frederick A. Hudson. Minutes of the Faculty, January 21, 1829, Case Western Reserve University MSS, Archives

[72]Charles B. Storrs, An Address Delivered at the Western Reserve College, Hudson, Ohio, February 9, 1831 (Boston: Pierce and Parker, 1831).

[73]Oberlin College, Original Circular, March 8, 1834, Oberlin College MS, Archives, Robert Fletcher Papers.

[74]Rudolph, The American College, p. 87.

[75]Paul H. Mattingly, The Classless Profession: American Schoolmen in the Nineteenth Century (New York: New York University Press, 1975).

[76]Trustee Minuts, Lane Seminary, August 20, 1834, Oberlin College MS, Archives, Robert Fletcher Papers.

[77]Trustee Minutes, Western Reserve College, Case Western Reserve University MSS, Freiberger Library.

[78]Minutes of the Faculty, June 23, 1847. Case Western Reserve University MSS, Archives. This is a typical entry requisting permission from the freshmen to form a society. In addition, in 1838, the Adelphic Society was having difficulty in obtaining a charter from the State of Ohio because the charter lacked faculty signatures. A committee of students met with the faculty to correct the situation. Minutes of the Adelphic Society, January 15, 1838.

[79]Minutes of the Faculty, July 10, 1838, Oberlin College MSS, Treasurer's Office.

[80]Harding, College Literary Societies, p. 306.

[81]Minutes of the Faculty, July 21, 1841, Case Western Reserve MSS, Archives.

[82]Minutes of the Faculty, January 21, 1829, Case Western University, Archives.

[83]H. C. Hitchcock, "Our Yale Bretheren," Oberlin Students Monthly : 392.

[84]Minutes of the Philozetian Society, 1828-1831, Case Western Reserve University MSS, Freiberger Library.